

REMARKS

The Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, asserting that the term "the user" in the claim lacks antecedent basis. Applicants have taken this rejection as being directed to claim 22 since claim 1 was cancelled. In any event, claim 22 has been amended, and no longer includes such a term, thus rendering this rejection moot.

The Examiner also rejected claims 22-23, 25-28, 30-39, 41, 42, 45-48, 50-53, 55, 56, 58-64, 66, 67, 70 and 71 under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being allegedly anticipated by Brennan. In response, claims 22 and 47 have been amended. Claims 23-27 and 48-52, along with claims 22 and 47, have also been amended to improve their form. Accordingly, a marked-up version of the amended claims to show the changes made is enclosed.

The invention is directed to a technique for management of a data source, e.g., a database, for use in an information assistance service. In accordance with the invention, a service subscriber may access selected data elements, e.g., private directories, in the database, subject to his/her access rights. For example, a private directory may contain contact information for an individual or a group. However, users of a private directory may be accorded different levels of access rights. For instance, a read-only user of the private directory has the right to read the directory only; an administrator of the private directory has the right to read and edit the directory, and provision new read-only users as well as restrict previously provisioned read-only users; an owner of a private directory, normally a creator thereof, not only has access rights commensurate with an administrator but also the rights to delete the directory, and provision and dismiss administrators of the directory. See page 6, line 19 et seq. of the specification.

In accordance with an aspect of the invention, an administrator and owner may also mark particular contact information in a directory "private" to disallow disclosure of

that particular contact information to a read-only user of the directory. See page 7, line 19 et seq.; Fig. 11 of the specification.

In an illustrative embodiment of the invention, a service subscriber may access private directories in the database through an operator at an information assistance service center. The private directories in the database accessible by the subscriber are identifiable by the subscriber's telephone number representative of the subscriber. For example, if the subscriber uses a wireless telephone to call the information assistance service, the telephone number of the subscriber's wireless telephone, also known as a mobile identification number (MIN), is used to identify the accessible directories in the database. Thus, when the subscriber calls the information assistance service at a predetermined access number, e.g., "411," "*555," "555-1212," etc., an interface in the service center receives call set-up signals in establishing the call by the subscriber-caller to the service center, which in a well known manner contain the originating telephone number, e.g., the subscriber's MIN in this instance. This originating number representative of the subscriber-caller in accordance with the invention is used by the service center to identify the private directories in the database accessible by the subscriber-caller. The operator who answers the information assistance call acts as an agent of the subscriber-caller to read, edit and/or delete one(s) of the identified directories, subject to similar access rights to those of the subscriber-caller.

Brennan discloses a system for management of calls to a personal telephone number of a PCS subscriber based on a subscriber profile. When a caller calls the personal number of the PCS subscriber, a personal agent 22 in the system determines which subscriber profile to use, "by checking the called number" against the personal numbers of all PCS subscribers. To that end, a signaling receiver 47 in the Brennan system is used to detect "the called number" and passes this to the personal agent 22, allowing the personal agent 22 "to access the subscriber profile corresponding to the

number called." Col. 11, line 30 et seq. of Brennan.

However, nowhere does Brennan teach or suggest the claimed invention where the data files are "identified by an identifier representative of the initiator" of the communication connection, e.g., the caller originating number, in the received call set-up signals, as amended claims 22 and 47 now recite. Thus, the claimed invention is not anticipated by Brennan. In fact, Brennan teaches away from the claimed invention by having the subscriber profile identified by the called number representative of the called party, as opposed to the originating number representative of the initiator of the call as in the claimed invention.

The teaching by Brennan away from the claimed invention is further evidenced by the fact that because the personal agent 22 in the Brennan system is programmed to check the called number to identify a subscriber profile, even when the subscriber accesses his/her subscriber profile, the subscriber needs to call his/her "own personal number," which is presented to the agent 22 as a called number. Column 13, line 3 et seq. of Brennan. Otherwise, the subscriber has to call a special number. In that case, because the personal agent 22 cannot rely on the called special number to access the subscriber profile, the subscriber personal number is elicited from the subscriber after the telephone connection is established, as indicated at step 812 in Fig. 3a of Brennan. Thus, for the foregoing reasons, amended claims 22 and 47, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over Brennan.

In addition, nowhere does Brennan teach or suggest the claimed invention represented by claims 30 and 55 where a private directory user is allocated a level of access to the directory "selected from a plurality of access levels," e.g, read-only, administrative or ownership levels. A fortiori, nowhere does Brennan teach or suggest that an operator be "accorded at least the level of access to the directory allocated to the user" in determining whether the operator can take an action on the directory on behalf of

the user, as claims 30 and 55 also recite. This being so, the claimed invention is not anticipated by Brennan. Nor is it obvious from reading Brennan. As such, claims 30 and 55, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over Brennan.

Moreover, nowhere does Brennan teach or suggest searching a database for contact information concerning a desired party to which a communication connection is initiated for the user, where the contact information is associated with an access right requirement, as claims 41 and 66 recite. A fortiori, nowhere does Brennan teach or suggest identifying an access right of the user concerning the contact information, and allowing disclosure of the contact information to the user when the access right of the user satisfies the access right requirement, as claims 41 and 66 also recite. This being so, the claimed invention is not anticipated by Brennan. Nor is it obvious from reading Brennan. As such, claims 41 and 66, together with their dependent claims, are patentable over Brennan.

The Examiner also rejected claims 24, 29, 32, 40, 43, 44, 49, 54, 57, 65, 68 and 69 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Brennan in view of Murphy. According to the Examiner, Murphy teaches use of a database which includes information concerning a group. Even assuming, arguendo, that the Examiner's description of Murphy is accurate, claims 24, 29, 32, 40, 43, 44, 49, 54, 57, 65, 68 and 69 are patentable over Brennan in view of Murphy by virtue of their dependency from claims 22, 30, 41, 47, 55 and 66, which are patentable for the reasons stated above.

In view of the foregoing, each of claims 22-71, as amended, is believed to be in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration of these claims is requested and

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allowance of the application is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully,

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Enclosure

Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

22. (Amended) A system for maintaining a [database] data source comprising:
an interface for receiving signals in establishing a communication connection with
[the user] an initiator of the communication connection, one or more [databases] data
elements in the data source which are associated with the [user] initiator being identified
based on an identifier representative of the initiator in the received signals;

a receiver for receiving from [a user] the initiator a request for taking an action
concerning a selected one of the [databases] data elements through the established
communication connection, the action being associated with an access right requirement;

a processor for identifying an access right of the [user] initiator concerning the
selected [database] data element; and

a device for taking the action when the access right of the [user] initiator meets
the access right requirement.

23. (Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the [database] selected data
element includes information concerning an individual.

24. (Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the [database] selected data
element includes information concerning a group.

25. (Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the action includes reading the
selected [database] data element.

26. (Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the action includes editing the
selected [database] data element.

27. (Amended) The system of claim 22 wherein the action includes deleting the selected [database] data element.

47. (Amended) A method for maintaining a [database] data source comprising:
receiving signals in establishing a communication connection with [the user] an initiator of the communication connection;

identifying one or more [databases] data elements in the data source which are associated with the [user] initiator based on an identifier representative of the initiator in the received signals;

receiving from [a user] the initiator a request for taking an action concerning a selected one of the [databases] data elements through the established communication connection, the action being associated with an access right requirement;

identifying an access right of the [user] initiator concerning the selected [database] data element; and

taking the action when the access right of the [user] initiator meets the access right requirement.

48. (Amended) The method of claim 47 wherein the [database] selected data element includes information concerning an individual.

49. (Amended) The method of claim 47 wherein the [database] selected data element includes information concerning a group.

50. (Amended) The method of claim 47 wherein the action includes reading the selected [database] data element.

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51. (Amended) The method of claim 47 wherein the action includes editing the selected [database] data element.

52. (Amended) The method of claim 47 wherein the action includes deleting the selected [database] data element.